Rural Enterprise Development Centres

722. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open 50 rural enterprise development centres under the Department of Science and Technology all over the country;

(b) if so, whether the scheme has been drawn up and the location identified in each State/Union Territory for setting up of the Centres; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) to (c) A proposal to promote Rural Enterprise Development has been submitted to the Working Group set up for formulating Ninth Five Year Plan for the department of Science & Technology. This includes implementation of the programme in rural areas for diffusion of technologies and development of rural enterprises. Specific locations have not been identified.

Harassment of foreigners

723. SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN:
SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times of 18th February, 19% to the effect that three foreigners were harassed and humiliated by the train staff/superintendent; and

(b) whether the matter was investigated; if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYAS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) Inquiry against the concerned staff has been instituted. In the meanwhile, he has been withdrawn from train duty.

Private sector participation in multipurpose projects

724. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have invited private sector participation in water resources, particularly in multipurpose projects;

(b) if so, the projects identified in different States for the purpose; and

(c) the private sector companies which have taken keen interest in implementing irrigation projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However to examine the feasibility and scope of private sector participation in Irrigation and Multi-Purpose Projects, the Government constituted a high level Committee which submitted its report on 22nd December, 1995. The Committee concluded that while private sector participation is feasible in respect of all irrigation (surface and ground water) and multi-purpose projects, it would be desirable to introduce this on pilot basis for seleted projects.

Increase in equity stake by foreign companies

725. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to allow